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[News release]

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CBC, CABLE COMPANIES SEEK CRTC POSTPONEMENT
OF PARLIAMENTARY CHANNEL HEARING

OTTAWA -- The CBC and members of the Canadian Cable television industry today requested that the CRTC delay the public hearing of their jointly-filed application for a licence to operate a national programming service to be called the Canadian Parliamentary Channel (CPaC). The hearing had been scheduled for February 7, 1989.

The request was made in response to a letter from the Speaker of the House of Commons to the CRTC. In his letter, the Speaker noted that, while the Board of Internal Economy of the House of Commons, "in principle, supports the general concept of an enhanced parliamentary television service", given the timing of the CRTC's public hearing, it had not yet been possible to undertake "broad-based consultation, either with party caucuses or with individual members of the House of Commons, particularly newly-elected Members, in order to ascertain their views on this licence application." The Speaker asked the Commission to delay rendering a decision on the application "until the views of Members of the House of Commons can be made known to the Commission and the Commission has had an opportunity to consider them."

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Inasmuch as the partners in the application have consistently maintained that the understanding and cooperation of the Speaker and the Members of the House were of critical importance, they felt that parliamentarians should now be afforded additional time for consultation.

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